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To the memory of

CHARLES LUCAS, M. D.

formerly one of the Representatives in Parliament for the  
CITY OF DUBLIN,

whose incorruptible integrity, unflinching spirit,  
just judgment, and glorious perseverance in the Great Cause  
of Liberty, Virtue, and his Country, endeared him  
to his grateful constituents,  
this Tombstone is placed over his much respected remains,  
as a small and sincere tribute of remembrance, by one  
of his fellow-citizens and constituents,  
SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM, KNT.

Lucas, Hibernia's friend, her love and pride,  
Her powerful bulwark, and her skilful guide,  
Firm in the senate, steady to his trust,  
Unmoved by fear, and obstinately just.

O'G.

## LANDING OF THE FRENCH AT KILLALA.

BY AN EYE WITNESS.

Killala, an ancient Bishop's See, deriving its name from a cell, built by Amhley, the Amalgadeus\* of St. Patrick, was, at the period of my recollection, a neat and picturesque little town.

Never shall I forget the impression made on my youthful mind, on first beholding this interesting place. Its lofty round steeple,† (the still existing remains of its ancient church,) insulated on an eminence in the centre of the town; its capacious harbour and contiguous arm of the mighty Atlantic, present objects of unceasing interest; whilst fertile corn fields, luxuriant meadows, and groves of venerable trees, descending to the water's edge, invested the entire scene with an air of tranquillity and repose.

Proceeding westward, two short miles, the Owenmore (big

\* Amalgadus, Amhley (hodie Awley) was prince of this district, on the arrival of Saint Patrick, called by a voice from the wood of Foclut (Faghd) to the conversion of the natives of this country, Awley received the Apostle with hospitality, by whom he was converted, together with 7000 of his subjects in one day, after a violent disputation with the Chief of the Druids, whose Crum Dhu, or Altar of Sacrifice he overturned, casting the eternal fire into a cavern communicating with the ocean, called therefrom, to this day, *Pal na shan tinne*, or the cavern of the ancient fire. The memory of this event is annually celebrated on the first Sunday in August, called Donagh Crum Dhu, at Downpatrick, five miles west of Killala. Awley divided his principality, thenceforth called Tyravley, amongst his sons—retired from the cares of the world, to a cell, which he built at the place, thenceforth called Killala, in Irish, Kilawley—near Killala is *Kill-e-brone*, or the cell of Bronus, with whom according to the book of Armagh, the Apostle sojourned a considerable time during these events.

† No subject connected with Irish Antiquities has been so fruitful of controversy and conjecture as these ecclesiastical buildings, called by the natives in Irish *Clochach*, or the *House of the Bell*, in contradistinction to *Clogas*—the Belfry, a place of *Bells*. The theorist, blinded by prejudice, or system, seeks for their origin amongst the Danes, forgetting that except in Dublin, and a few other points on the coast contiguous, they possessed no footing in this kingdom; and that neither in their native country, nor in the Danish part of Dublin, which was their capital, do such buildings exist. Klaproth in his "Travels in Georgia," describes one of these round steeples, as attached to a church in that country—what will the theorists say to that? The round form of these steeples, was probably in compliance with the former religious feelings of the people, or to ensure their durability; if the latter, they have fully answered the intention. The steeple of Killala, and primitive Church were built by Gobhan, an eminent architect, and divine, about the close of the sixth century, as were many other similar buildings in that country. Gobhan retired to a cell, the ruins of which are still to be seen, a mile west of Killala; and here also is to be seen the Stone intended to surmount and form the apex of the steeple. This beautiful steeple was struck by lightning in February 1800, attracted by the iron of a weathercock, the fluid entered at the top, and bursting out about the middle, left a hideous chasm, which, to the disgrace of the neighbourhood, is still unrepaired.

river) is crossed, over a stately bridge of eleven arches, to the then romantic hamlet of Parsonstown and the more than princely mansion of the Palmers'. The road here, branches N.E., following the course of the river for [nearly a mile, when bending N.W., parallel to the Bay of Rathfrank it is lost in the lands at the village of Foghill, (the Foclut of Irish history.) Within a small mile of Foghill, on the edge of a creek, near the western extremity of the bay of Rathfrank stands the grey ruin of Kilcummin, a cell built by Cummin or Cumean Fian,\* in the seventh century; and here it was that on the evening of the 22d of August, 1798, the soldiers of Quiberon, Castlebar, and New Orleans, landed at the head of 900 men to attempt the conquest of Ireland.

The fertile tract through which the Owenmore pursues its course to the ocean, forms a sort of delta or triangle; bounded on the north by the bays of Killala and Rathfrank and by the Atlantic; on the S.E. by the Tyravley (vulgarly Ox) Mountains; on the west by the mountainous district of Erris, whilst at its apex, Nephin rears its hoary head in solitary grandeur to the clouds.

This was the centre and strong hold of the Belgic colonies (Firbolg) who several centuries before Christianity possessed themselves of the maritime district, extending from Erris head, in the western extremity of Mayo, to Bundruis (Owendruis) within a few miles of Ballyshannon, now in the county of Donegal. Renowned for bravery, traditional poetry still celebrates the deeds of *Goll M'Morna* and his valiant Belgæ, aiding the redoubtable militia of Leinster, under Fin M'Cumhal, but overpowered by foreign invaders. After a lapse of several centuries, the sovereignty of Connaught passed from the posterity of the Belgæ, to the descendants of the Mileti, (clan e Mile.) Their warlike character, however, remained unchanged.

When, in the twelfth century, Henry II. assigned to four great Lords of his household, the conquests of this province, they were opposed by the natives, with invincible obstinacy; confined within their castles (cemented, like the *σπιρηχισμα* of the Greeks, with the blood of their followers) it was not until they became denationalized, and adopted Irish names and customs, that they were admitted into the cherished family of the Gael. Three centuries later, during the wars of Elizabeth, designated still as "Cogger na Caillie," (the bag's war) they were in arms; and whilst O'Brien of Thomond and O'Conor Donn of Maghera Connachte, espoused her cause, the Belgæ and Hiberno-English of this district, in defiance of her bravest warriors and most renowned generals, proceeded to elect a Mac William Eighter, at the castle of Athlethan, within two miles of the English Camp.

The fatal surprise at Ardnaree, resembling a massacre more than a battle, and the storm and capture of Athlethan, rendered further resistance unavailing—they followed the destiny of their country. In the disastrous campaigns of 1690—91, they sent numerous troops to the Royal army; several of their regiments, together with numerous independent companies were at Aughrim; besides 8000 men, who, under Baldrig O'Donnell, were advanced within eight miles of that fatal field on the day of battle. Two hours would have brought the nimble Belgæ on the rear of De Ginkles army, already in disorder and confusion. The thunder of the cannon, and the rolling volleys of the musketry, were audible in O'Donnell's quarters; his soldiers eagerly demanded to be led to the assistance of their countrymen; but neither the roar of the artillery, nor the ardour of his troops, could induce the holy traitor to advance. O'Donnell afterwards joined Ginkles army, and assisted in besieging Sir T. O'Regan in

\* Cummin, or Cumean Fian, according to Ware, was a native of Donegal, and abbot of Hy or Iona in Scotland in the 7th century, from whence he arrived in Ireland; he it was who caused the Western Church to adopt the Roman mode of fixing the celebration of Easter, as may appear from his Encyclical letter to the abbot of Hy. Ware is ignorant of the district in which Cumean presided, conjecturing it to have been in some part of the King's County. The cell of Kilcummin is unroofed, but otherwise pretty entire. Cumean is buried near it, and at his head was placed a square slab inscribed with the contracted Irish characters. This precious relic was removed some years ago, by a clergyman, not a native of that country—should this meet his eye, or that of his superior, the Right Rev. Doctor M'Hale, it is hoped they will restore it to where it is only of value; or publish a copy of a monument capable of deciding and elucidating a doubtful point, in the ecclesiastical antiquities of Ireland.

Sligo, where he was beaten; abandoned by his men, and unmindful of the miseries inflicted on his country by his treachery, he solicited the command of a battalion in William's army, and met a fate too honourable for his deserts in Flanders. After these events, the inhabitants of this district sunk into a state of political insignificance and apathy; not that they were indifferent to the fall of their country, but the voice of their Chiefs was heard no more; the bravest had fallen at Aughrim, or expatriated themselves, to maintain in foreign fields, the rights of their sovereign, and the glory of their country.

The recollection and recital of these deeds forms a singular feature in the character of this people. Associating the glorious feats of arms of their expatriated countrymen with the renown of the soldiers of France, the child inherited the predilections of the father for the warriors of that nation; and whether *Te Deum* was chaunted by despotism, for Landen, Fontenoy, or Laffeld; or that the *Tocsin* of democracy sounded the victories of Jemappe, Fleurus, or Valmy, the descendant of the Belgæ equally participated in the triumph.

This spirit, however, did not lead to acts of violence, or of insubordination to the laws; alike remote from scenes of oppression and reaction, they were not participants in any of the lawless unions, which at various times and places were opposed to the government. Secluded within their mountains, the tranquillity of their lives was rarely disturbed; and when the torch of insurrection blazed throughout the land they beheld its progress unmoved. Calm as the havens which indent their coast, the arrival of the French warriors on their shores, in the end of August, 1798, first startled their repose and roused them to action.

A serene and cloudless sky, and brilliant sun, rendered the 22d of August one of the finest days of that remarkable season.

It was on the morning of that day, whilst proceeding from Palmerstown to Killala, I first beheld a ship of war; three vessels of unusual size, magnified by the still calm of the ocean, stretched slowly across the bay of Rathfrank, (on the larboard tack), weathering the reef which divides it from the bay of Killala: a smaller vessel appeared in the offing.

About twelve o'clock the frigates were visible from the steeple hill and the higher parts of the town; they showed English colours.

The collector and some other persons proceeded on board; between two and three o'clock, p. m. the frigates were standing across towards the bay of Rathfrank; marks of agitation and restlessness became now apparent amongst several of the inhabitants. I met O'Kearney, the classical teacher, as he was returning from the "Acres," a remote and elevated quarter of the town, a half-suppressed smile of satisfaction played on his countenance as he saluted me; it was the last time we ever spoke. At four o'clock the agitation and alarm increased; the revenue officers had not returned. The inhabitants were fronted on the Steeple Hill, Captain William Kirkwood of the yeomanry, now joined in uniform, as were several of his corps, who now began to make their appearance. Two officers of the Carabineers arrived from Ballina; they had been at the Cape of Good Hope, and were judges of all those sort of things; we awaited their opinion with anxiety—they could form none. "Here," said Captain Kirkwood, handing his telescope to an old seaman belonging to the town, who had served under Howe and Rodney, "here, tell me what these vessels are." "They are French, Sir, (replied the veteran), I know them by the cut and colour of their sails."

Quitting the crowd, Captain Kirkwood was accosted by Neal Kerugan, (afterward an active chief of insurgents), inquiring, what nation the frigates belonged to. "Ah, Neal, (replied the Captain) you know as well as I do." Returning now to Palmerstown, I had scarcely arrived, when a neighbouring peasant on horseback, breathless, and with the perspiration of terror streaming down his forehead, announced that a body of strangers in dark uniforms, had landed from the ships—were distributing arms—had been joined by several of the inhabitants, and were actually advancing.—"There they come," said he, pointing to an eminence a mile and half distant, over which the road passed, and we beheld a dark and solid mass, moving onwards; their arms glittered in the rays of the declining sun. They were occasionally visible as they passed over the inequalities of the ground, till emerging from a banky part of the road, within a quarter of a mile of Palmerstown, we beheld their column of about 800

men, silently, but rapidly, advancing. They were preceded at some distance by a single horseman, a robust middle-aged man, dressed in a long green hunting frock, and high conical fur cap; stopping for a moment, he saluted us in the *Loinster* patois of Irish, with "*Go de mu ha tu.*" (how do ye do?)—A general officer (Sarrazin) and *Aid du Camp* (Mr. Tone) were now close up, a laugh of approbation was interchanged between the *Chasseur* and his General.

The Commander-in-Chief (Humbert) seated in a gig now advanced at the head of this celebrated band of warriors, which regularly, but with precision, pressed rapidly forwards; calm and unconcerned, they presented no indication of men going into combat. Having crossed the bridge of Palmerstown, about 300 men were countermarched and bivouacked on the green esplanade in front of the village; the remainder marched on to Killala.

The sun had set behind the western wave and the grey twilight of evening was fast advancing, as the French, descending the hill of Mullagharn, beheld the yeomanry and a party of the *Liecestershire* fencibles, forming on a commanding ridge, at the entrance of the town; Captain Kirkwood had been just apprised of the hostile landing, by a fisherman, who had crossed at Rathfrank, whilst the French detoured by Palmerstown; and had ordered his men to this post, from which, however, they retired into the town, on the nearer approach of the French. Three streets diverge from the centre of Killala, in the form of a sportsman's turn-screw: one southerly towards the "Acres;" a second westerly, by which the French were advancing; the third or main street, easterly, winding by the Church-yard wall, on a steep declivity to the Castle; and onwards towards Ballina.

It was on the edge of this declivity, the military re-formed; Moreau could not have chosen a more judicious position for a retreat. Humbert on reaching the outskirts of the town, made his dispositions: he detached a party under Neal Kerugan (who had first joined him), across the Meadows, to enter by the "Acres," road, in order to cut off the retreat of the military by that rout, or turn them if in position; he advanced a few sections, en *Tirailleurs*, to occupy the ridge from which the military had retired. The *Chasseur* galloped into the town to reconnoitre; he was scarcely out of sight in the winding street, when a single shot was heard, followed at a short interval, by a random scattery volley:—it was a moment of anxious suspense, but the *Chasseur* bore a charmed life. On approaching the Market-place, he was challenged by a yeoman, (a young gentleman of the place), who had loitered behind his companions, with "What do ye want, you spy?" the answer was a bullet through the body, and he fell dead into the door of a house at which he was standing. The veteran then reconnoitred the line of the military, and receiving their fire, returned to his comrades: he related these events with the *sang froid* of an amateur; he had been in twenty battles, and had never had the honour of receiving the entire fire of the enemy's line before. The *Tirailleurs* were warmly engaged; the column redoubled its speed, and at the centre of the town, a party of *Grenadiers* which marched at its head, deployed on the main street; they were received by an ill directed volley from the military, at about one hundred yards distance: their Captain was struck with a ball on the foot, foaming with rage, he ordered his *Grenadiers* to charge. It was refused by the Military; the Yeomanry first broke ground and were soon followed by the Fencibles. Protected by the declivity and the church-yard wall, from the French fire, the yeomanry escaped through the Castle gates; the Fencibles fled onwards towards Ballina; Captain Kirkwood turned down, by his own house, to the strand, expecting to reach Ballina, unperceived, by that route. One yeoman alone remained, Mr. Smith, the respectable apothecary of the town; aged and afflicted with gout, he was unable to keep pace with his companions; excluded, on shutting the castle gates, he struggled to reach his own house, it was not distant one hundred yards, but his days were numbered; the *Chasseur* was at his heels, eager to make Captain Kirkwood, (whom he first observed) his prisoner, he disdained the same favour to a soldier belonging to the ranks—he fired and the unfortunate man fell a lifeless corpse.

A. I.

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